

# THE FURPHY

ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

*June 2022 Edition*



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General Meetings:                      Second Sunday of the month at 1030hrs

Annual General Meeting:              Second Sunday of September

## **Committee Positions**

| <b>Armadale Sub-Branch Committee</b> |                      |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| President                            | Mr Ken Hepburn       |
| Vice President                       | Mr Hans van de Velde |
| Secretary                            | Ms Carol King        |
| Assistant Secretary                  | Mr Mike Fairweather  |
| Treasurer                            | Mrs Cheryl Cowie     |
| Assistant Treasurer                  | Vacant               |
| Warden                               | Mr Graeme Cowie      |
| Membership Officer                   | Mr Tom Rynn          |
| Committee                            | Mr John Hennah       |
| Committee                            | Mr Rod Jonsson       |
| Committee                            | Mr Paul Newman       |
| Committee                            | Mr Laurie Sargeson   |
| Advocate / Welfare                   | Mr Brent Errington   |
| Bar Manager                          | Mr Mike Fairweather  |

### **ADVOCATE / WELFARE REPORT (ERRO)**

**I currently am available as follows:**

***Operating out of RAAFA on Mondays between 0900 – 1230hrs***

***and***

***The Armadale RSL Sub-Branch between 1000-1400hrs on Thursdays***

# **PRESIDENTS REPORT**

Hi Folks,

I have some sad news, that is the passing of Peter Mahoney, a long-time member, and a former Treasurer of the Sub – Branch. Peter served over 40 years in the Royal Australian Artillery.

There will be a presentation on Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2022, prior to our monthly meeting by “life live it”, Occupational Therapy, at 1030 hours. They specialise in rehabilitation in the home and work with DVA in keeping veterans safe and independent at home.

There needs to be some work done to improve the kitchen floor, this will occur during early June 22, so we can start using the kitchen again.

Regards

*Ken Hepburn*

President

Returned Services League Armadale Sub-Branch

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# Secretary's Notes

Hi Everyone,

Things appear to have finally settled down to our version of "normal" after a very hectic April.

We are looking for a volunteer to work with Cheryl as Assistant Treasurer for Sub-Branch. If anyone is interested, please contact either me or the President to obtain a nomination form.

Should any members have anything they wish to submit for inclusion in upcoming editions of the Furphy, please e-mail [barmanager@armadalersl.com.au](mailto:barmanager@armadalersl.com.au). Thanks Stormy for your assistance in this regard, it's been very much appreciated.

With the Covid situation improving, the Social Committee have contracted Mark Stone, a solo acoustic musician to perform in the hall on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> July. He specialises in 90's British music but enjoys playing an eclectic mix to suit any crowd. We will have lunch for sale and we hope you will show your support by joining us on that day.

Cheers for now,

*Carol King*

Secretary

## Diary Dates for June

|                  |         |                              |      |
|------------------|---------|------------------------------|------|
| 5 <sup>th</sup>  | Sunday  | Social Committee Meeting     | 1100 |
| 7 <sup>th</sup>  | Tuesday | Management Committee Meeting | 1830 |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> | Sunday  | General Meeting              | 1030 |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> | Friday  | MBMMC Meeting                | 1930 |

# Membership Update

*as at 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2022*

Service Members: 191  
Affiliate Members: 44  
Social Members: 43

As anticipated in the last Furphy there has been a drop in financial membership following the close-off date at the end of April for both Service and Affiliate Members. The latest figures are a reflection of what is occurring in many organisations.

It is becoming even more difficult to attract volunteers across the spectrum of all charitable groups and the RSL is no exception notwithstanding that more and more veterans are in need of assistance.

Membership has dropped from 2011 (422) to our current total of 278. Our highest total was in 2015 with 464 members. Whilst Service and Social membership has been fairly constant, our greatest fall has been in Affiliate numbers. The centenary commemorations certainly played a part in boosting our numbers but we have not maintained that impetus.

## ***Tom Rynn***

Armadale RSL Sub Branch  
Membership Officer  
Mob: 0439934285  
Email: [tomrynn@bigpond.com](mailto:tomrynn@bigpond.com)

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**A WOMAN WALKED INTO THE KITCHEN TO FIND HER HUSBAND STALKING AROUND WITH A FLY SWATTER**

**'WHAT ARE YOU DOING?' SHE ASKED.**

**'HUNTING FLIES' HE RESPONDED.**

**'OH. ! KILLING ANY?' SHE ASKED.**

**'YEP, 3 MALES, 2 FEMALES,' HE REPLIED.**

**INTRIGUED, SHE ASKED. 'HOW CAN YOU TELL THEM APART?'**

**HE RESPONDED, '3 WERE ON A BEER CAN, 2 WERE ON THE PHONE.**

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY



## June Service Members:

|          |    |          |       |
|----------|----|----------|-------|
| Adams    | Mr | William  | 09/06 |
| Bell     | Mr | Timothy  | 26/06 |
| Bennett  | Mr | Andrew   | 06/06 |
| Boyce    | Mr | John     | 15/06 |
| Chesson  | Mr | Adrian   | 13/06 |
| Copley   | Mr | Leonard  | 28/06 |
| Cowie    | Mr | Graeme   | 18/06 |
| Ferguson | Mr | Peter    | 11/06 |
| Geraghty | Mr | Patrick  | 08/06 |
| Granland | Ms | Margaret | 25/06 |
| Hine     | Mr | Paul     | 14/06 |
| Millar   | Mr | Garry    | 03/06 |
| Offord   | Mr | Graham   | 10/06 |
| Payne    | Mr | Colin    | 29/06 |
| Peisley  | Mr | Andrew   | 16/06 |
| Sottiaux | Mr | Paul     | 29/06 |
| Symes    | Mr | Jonathon | 08/06 |
| Wearne   | Mr | Graham   | 07/06 |
| Willmott | Mr | Albert   | 14/06 |
| Wright   | Mr | James    | 05/06 |

## June Affiliate Members:

|         |     |           |       |
|---------|-----|-----------|-------|
| Craster | Mrs | Irene     | 11/06 |
| Ewers   | Mrs | Felicidad | 27/06 |
| Gildare | Mrs | Isabel    | 24/06 |
| Jordan  | Mr  | Barry     | 28/06 |
| King    | Ms  | Carol     | 16/06 |
| King    | Mrs | Val       | 14/06 |

## June Social Members:

|            |      |        |       |
|------------|------|--------|-------|
| Hair       | Miss | Julie  | 02/06 |
| Hutchinson | Mr   | David  | 22/06 |
| Ritson     | Mrs  | Mary   | 20/06 |
| Skipworth  | Mr   | Paul   | 13/06 |
| Welch      | Mr   | Graham | 23/06 |
| Whitworth  | Mr   | Cliff  | 29/06 |

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**The members above may collect a free drink of their choice during  
the month of June**

***We hope you have a very special Birthday***

# Bar Manager's Report

**Hello to all Members,**

**Our new Duty Bar Manager, Julie is now on board and thanks to everyone for making her so welcome.**

**We have a Solo Artist booked for the 3<sup>rd</sup> July and I hope more members support this initiative.**

**I hope to see you all in the Club again soon, remember you can always bring a guest or two along with you !**

**Kindest regards,**

*Stormy*

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## What's on at the Bar?

Special Deals for you:

Cabernet Sauvignon

\$7.00 per Bottle

(\$75.00 a Case of 12)

**Until Sold Out**

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## Happy Hour

Fridays – 1300 to 1400

Sundays – 1300 to 1400



## **The Military Brotherhood Military Motorcycle Club**

Nearly half way through the year already, time is flying by. The last few months have been busy for many of us, not just with the club but in our personal lives also.

ANZAC Day was spent in a variety of different place for members of the club. Armadale, Albany/ Denmark, Bassendean, Perth City and all the other place I forgot. Popeye, and myself along with Sarge, Mel, Rhino and Zappa have the pleasure of attending Albany/ Denmark. What a day it was, early start for us. Dawn service was in Denmark and then the main service in Albany. We march in the parade alongside members of The Patriots. It was great with the two military clubs combining for this. As we marched by, the crowds claps and cheers increased in recognition of our veterans. I am sure those who attended the many other services around have many stories to tell also.

May 8<sup>th</sup> brought around the RFDS Charity Ride. Again, we combined with The Patriots and the Western Grunts also joined us. It was fantastic to see these three military bike clubs working together and something we are striving to happen more often. 60 plus bikes turned up on short notice and also being Mother's Day, it was a great turn out. Staff from the RFDS that were present on the day were amazed at what we could put together at such short notice. This ride raised \$3500 towards the RFDS fundraising goal of \$600 000, which is going to be used for equipment for their planes. All donations that were rising were being doubled by corporate sponsors. Over \$700 000 was raised for this essential service. This was the inaugural ride for us and we are planning to make it an annual event, bigger and better next year.

Please stay safe, till next time.



Tracey "Frosty" Newman  
Assistant Secretary  
MBMMC Perth South







Our motto is  
**"The Task is Ours"**  
Military Brotherhood MMC Perth South



# Significant June Event

## Operation Overlord and the Battle of Long Khanh

By June 1971 Australia had been involved in the Vietnam War for nine years. With no end in sight to an unpopular war, the Australians – like the Americans – were reducing their forces as they prepared to pull out of Vietnam.

The withdrawal would take time and would not be easy. Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army forces began preparing to move troops from Long Khanh Province back into Phuoc Tuy Province, hoping to lure the Australians into a large-scale ambush in order to inflict a heavy defeat and a propaganda victory.

Aware of the enemy movement, the Australians launched Operation Overlord – named after the 1944 invasion of Normandy – aimed at destroying the enemy forces and preventing them from interfering with the province's security and the Australian withdrawal.

On 5 June the Australians deployed by helicopter and armoured personnel carriers north to the province border of Phuoc Tuy, near the Courtenay Rubber Plantation. 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (3RAR) would take the lead in assaulting enemy positions, while 4RAR/NZ and American troops held blocking positions to trap enemy forces looking to escape. Australian armoured personnel carriers (APCs) from 3 Cavalry Regiment, tanks from 1 Armoured Regiment, artillery from 12 Field Regiment and sappers from 1 Field Squadron would also be in support.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

FOD/71/0305/VN

*A Centurion tank of C Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment moving through the jungle on Operation Overlord, June 1971.*

After two days patrolling, B Company, 3RAR had found what they thought was the main enemy position, just across the border in Long Khanh province. The next morning, 7 June, B Company's 5 Platoon led by Lieutenant Graham Kells began a morning assault on the enemy positions. They had not gone far when automatic fire spewed from at least four enemy positions and the understrength platoon was pinned down unable to move and with several men wounded. Trapped on the edge of a cleverly concealed bunker system, they called for artillery and air support. The Battle of Long Khanh had begun. Sergeant Eddie Desfontaines recalled:

In the initial burst of fire the platoon took a few casualties, the most serious being Private Mitchell who was shot through the throat. The platoon deployed; we realised that we were in deep poo. The platoon was receiving fire from the front as well as from the flanks (English, p. 33).



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P05389.004

*A typical enemy bunker encountered by the Australians on Operation Overlord. Most were very stoutly constructed and well concealed*

By mid-morning the stranded platoon was low on ammunition and in danger of being outflanked and overrun. RAAF helicopters were called in to deliver ammunition and evacuate the wounded, bravely hovering low over the battle raging below. Later that morning one was shot down. Two men were killed in the crash and others were wounded. As air support and artillery kept the enemy at bay, other Australians managed to reach their comrades and bolster their

defences. That the afternoon tanks and armoured personnel carriers (APCs) fought their way through enemy positions to link up with B Company. After a tense night holding a defensive perimeter, the battle of Long Khanh was over.

The enemy had in fact quietly withdrawn during the afternoon.

Private Don Hannaford remembered the scene as they mopped up the following morning:

... we moved through the bunker system with the tanks. Once we left where the platoon's position had been the day before, the jungle was just obliterated. I remember there were bits and pieces of human flesh and limbs all over the place, and blood trails everywhere. The enemy was obviously a very large force and they had taken every dead body they could carry with them, leaving virtually none behind (English, p. 54).

The enemy force encountered were elements of 3 Battalion, 33 North Vietnamese Army Regiment, comprised of some 40 members of its C10 Company, and some additional men from its C12 Heavy Weapons Company.

In this battle three Australians had been killed; one artillery forward observer hit during the initial firefight (Second Lieutenant Ian Mathers), and two RAAF men in the chopper crash, Flight Lieutenant Everitt Lance and Corporal David Dubber. Ten more men were wounded, including two of the chopper crew.

Operation Overlord continued and on 12 June the enemy ambushed APCs patrolling the area of operations. A rocket propelled grenade hit an external storage bin on one vehicle containing several Claymore mines, causing a massive explosion that killed seven on board and wounded others – the greatest number of Australian casualties in a single incident during the war. Overlord concluded two days later.

The operation was successful in driving the enemy from their bases in the area and thwarting plans for further incursions into Phuoc Tuy – at least temporarily. But the enemy force had not been destroyed; only six dead were found but likely more would have been carried away by their comrades. Ten Australians had been killed in action and 24 wounded. This was a stark reminder that the enemy was still dangerous and would fight to the bitter end. For their bravery under fire, eight Australians were recognised with awards including Lieutenant Kells who was awarded the Military Cross.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P05146.001

*Survivors of 5 Platoon, B Company, 3 Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (3RAR) a fortnight after the Battle of Long Khanh in June 1971.*

**Craig Tibbitts**

28 May 2021

*By Courtesy of the Australian War Memorial*







**RETURNED SERVICES LEAGUE  
ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH**

*Your RSL*